

Draft

# Columbia Gorge Province Summary

August 16, 2000

Prepared for the  
Northwest Power Planning Council

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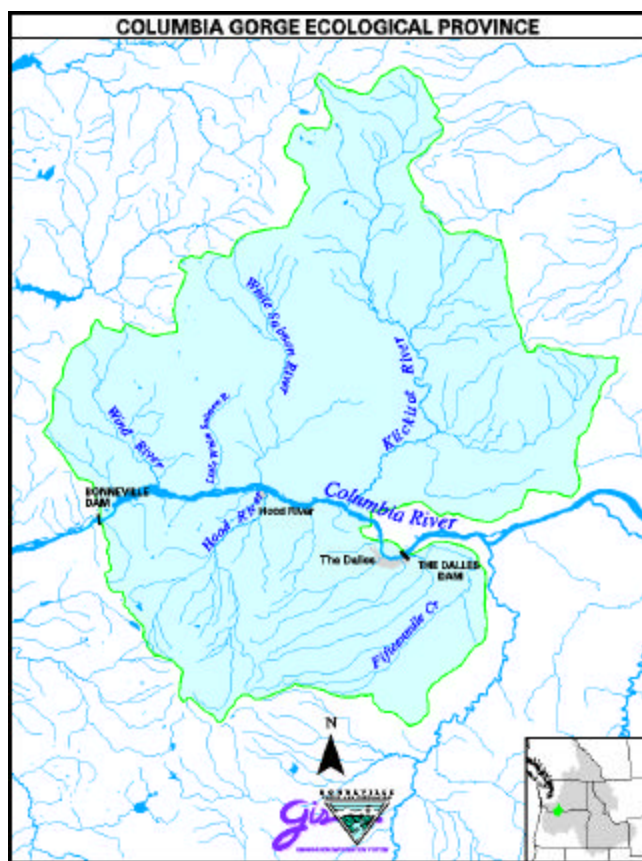
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# Columbia Gorge Province Summary

## Geographic Description

The Columbia Gorge Province is bounded by Bonneville Lock and Dam (closed 1938) at river km 235 and The Dalles Dam (closed 1957) at river km 308 on the Columbia River, located about 64 km east of Portland and Vancouver (Figure 1). The mainstem reservoir is entirely within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. For this review the following subbasins have been evaluated:

1. Bonneville Reservoir;
2. Hood River and Oregon tributaries to the Columbia River between Bonneville Dam and the Hood River;
3. Fifteenmile Creek and Oregon tributaries to the Columbia River between Hood River and The Dalles Dam;
4. Klickitat River;
5. Little White Salmon River;
6. White Salmon River; and
7. Wind River.



**Figure 1. Columbia Gorge Province.**

## **Fish and Wildlife Resources**

### **Habitat Description**

#### **Aquatic Conditions**

The construction of Bonneville Dam has greatly modified the characteristics of the mainstem Columbia River, while tributary dams have impacted the Little White Salmon and the Hood rivers. These dams have generally created habitat conditions benefiting non-indigenous species to the detriment of indigenous species, while impairing or completely blocking fish movement.

#### **Terrestrial Conditions**

The loss of the riverine riparian zone along the Columbia River, residential development, timber harvest and the development of agricultural land has had a major impact on wildlife species abundance and diversity. This development has fragmented the remaining white oak forest in the lower portions of the tributaries which many indigenous wildlife species are dependent upon. The headwater areas of head streams remain in coniferous forests and provide critical habitat for wildlife. The construction of highways and freeways has interrupted natural migrations and limited access to the limited remaining riparian habitat

## **Fish and Wildlife Status**

### **Fish**

Seven anadromous and at least 31 resident fish species, of which 15 are non-indigenous, have been documented in this Province. Bonneville and The Dalles dams are barriers to most resident fish and cause significant losses to upstream and downstream migrating anadromous fish. All indigenous populations of both anadromous and resident fish are severely depressed or extinct in tributary streams from the impact of development in the subbasins, over-fishing and passage losses at dams.

### **Wildlife**

A variety of wildlife including large and small mammals, waterfowl, passerines, raptors, reptiles and amphibians are associated with Province riverine, wetland and upland habitats. While population status varies by area and species, many wildlife species are listed as federal and/or state Threatened, Endangered, Sensitive or At-Risk. Species associated with mature forest and large home ranges such as northern goshawk, spotted owl, pileated woodpecker, wolverine and pine martin have all been documented in recent years. Harlequin duck are noted as abundant in the Hood River and other Gorge tributaries. Peregrine falcon are known to use cliffs along the Columbia River for nesting habitat, and riverine and open orchard lands as foraging areas. Locally extirpated species include gray wolf, grizzly bear, California condor and mountain goat. Big game, furbearers, upland birds and waterfowl species are managed by both federal and state wildlife managers. The Province lies along a migratory waterfowl lane of the Pacific flyway.

## **Fish and Wildlife Goals**

The primary goal for the Columbia Gorge Province is to restore the health and function of the ecosystem to ensure continued viability of these important populations. An additional goal is to enhance the fisheries resources for increased natural production and harvest by through supplementation of native stocks.